

FARMER CO-OPS PROVIDING FOR

MICHIGAN

Farmer cooperatives in Michigan and across the country give individual farmers the opportunity to participate more fully in the agricultural and food system, from farm to retail. Through cooperatives, farmers are able to own and lead businesses that help strengthen their competitiveness in domestic and international markets.

Nationwide, farmer cooperatives support more than 200,000 jobs, with a total payroll exceeding \$12 billion, and contribute significantly to the economic well-being of rural America. The information below highlights the impact of farmer cooperatives in Michigan.



41

Farmer Co-ops in State

44,499

Farmer-Members in State

4,537

Jobs in State

\$331,043,374

Wages in State

USDA-RD Agriculture Cooperative Statistics 2024 & 2025

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF FARMER COOPERATIVES

50 F Street NW, Suite 900 Washington, DC 20001 | (202) 626-8700

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FROM BYPRODUCT TO BIOFUEL: MMPA TAKES FLIGHT

Michigan Milk Producers Association (MMPA), America's 10th largest dairy cooperative, partnered with Canadian company Dairy Distillery to convert milk permeate, a byproduct of ultrafiltration, into low-carbon ethanol for sustainable aviation fuel.

"At the time MMPA reached out, we were making vodka from milk permeate," said Omid McDonald, Dairy Distillery Founder & CEO. "We realized the volume would flood the market, but there's a strong need for low-carbon biofuel — that's where this project came from."

The result is a triple win: a valuable use for permeate that would otherwise go to waste; a new wastewater treatment plant running nearly carbon neutral on biogas produced during ethanol manufacturing; and a long-term revenue stream, with the airline industry committed to purchasing all the ethanol produced.



At MMPA's Constantine, Mich. plant, 14,000 tons of permeate will be piped directly to the ethanol facility annually with no additional transportation needed. The plant will offset 14,500 tons of carbon per year, with Constantine's ethanol emitting just 12 grams of CO₂ per megajoule compared to 88 grams for gasoline.

Groundbreaking on the \$41 million, 2.2-million-gallon facility took place in August 2024. As McDonald put it: "I never thought cows would fly."

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